HARAMBEE FLAME

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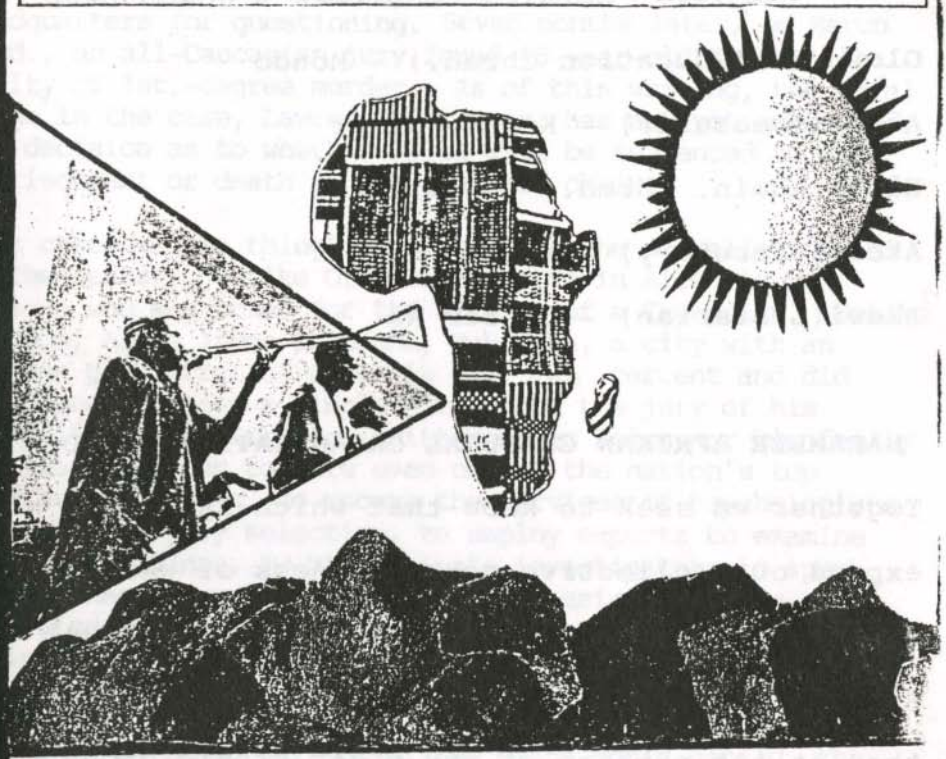

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HARAMBEE AFRIKAN CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

CENTRAL COMMITTEE

Alaga(Chairman) - Shaheed Khaleel Hamza

Eso/Alakoso Asha(Sgt.-at-Arms/Chrmn. of Cultural Affairs Committee - JaRon Dean

Olotu Eko(Education Chrmn.) - Mondo

Akapo(Treasurer) - Kenny Walker

Eleto(Admin. Chrmn.) - Iem Hotep

Akowe(Secretary) - Tyrone Hayes

Akewi(Librarian) - Ur ser Ra

HARAMBEE AFRIKAN CULTURAL ORGANIZATION CREED

Together we seek to know that which is us, to expand our collective consciousness of who we are and whence we come. We exalt in the fact that Afrikans are beautiful in our own right, rather than at the expense of any other ethnic group. And in the true spirit of the Swahili word, "harambee," we promote the idea that cultural awareness is germane to human growth.

Commentary

On the evening of August 20th., 1995, an Omaha cop, Jimmy Wilson, Jr., pulled over a van, apparently to do a license check. While still in his cruiser, he was shot several times and killed. Within about a minute of the shooting, Wilson was found behind the steering wheel by two other cops. Between 6:30 a.m. and noon of the following day, six African youth were arrested and taken to police headquarters for questioning. Seven months later, on March 23rd., an all-Caucasian jury found 18-year-old Kevin Allen guilty of 1st.-degree murder. As of this writing, the trial judge in the case, Lawrence Corrigan, has not yet announced his decision as to whether Allen will be sentenced to life imprisonment or death in the electric chair.

This case has one thing in common with the so-called "trial of the century." Like O.J. Simpson, Kevin Allen is an African who was tried for the killing of a Caucasian. Unlike Simpson, Allen lives in Omaha, Nebraska, a city with an African population of a little over ten percent and did not manage to have a single African on the jury of his "peers." Unlike Simpson, neither Kevin Allen nor his family had the resources to hire even one of the nation's top criminal attorneys, to secure the services of psychologists to assist in jury selection, to employ experts to examine physical evidence, to hire private investigators to speak with witnesses, or to hire other professionals whose expertise could give him more than a ghost of a chance against the powers of the **criminal** "justice" system of Nebraska.

In the March 22nd. edition of the Omaha World Herald, the defense counsel for Allen, Ed Fogarty, was reported to have said that there was **reasonable doubt** about the evidence. Apparently, however, none of the jurors found any such doubt, inasmuch as they returned with a "guilty" verdict on the day after they received the case and after a maximum of seven hours' deliberation and only one vote.

This brings us to the question of whether Kevin Allen had a jury of his peers. We have to go back in time, way back, to the writing of the U.S. Constitution and its declaration

that all men are created equal. If we consult a dictionary, we find that one's equal is his or her peer. When the Constitution was written, there were several thousand men in this country who were not included in the document's reference to "men." African men, indigenous(Native American) men, and other men of color were not considered "men." And non-land-holding Caucasian men were just barely "men." So when the Constitution spoke of all men being equal, it essentially meant that all land-holding Caucasian males were equal to each other before the law.

After the ending of chattel slavery, a number of amendings of the Constitution, various U.S. Supreme Court rulings, Congressional acts, etc., we arrived at a point, by 1965(the year the Voting Rights Act was passed and a year following passage of the Civil Rights Act), where Africans **officially** became equal to Caucasians. Thus, when an African is charged with a crime and is guaranteed a right to trial by a jury of his or her peers, it only means that he or she has a right to have his or her fate decided by **any** collection of folks because we are "all created equal." And while the U.S. Supreme Court has held that the right to a fair trial can be deemed violated by systematic exclusion of people of color from juries, it hasn't held that there is any Constitutional requirement that a defendant in a criminal case have a jury made up of, in whole or in part, people with whom he or she shares the same or similar social, economic, and/or racial background or identity.

We understand that people's cultural values, social environments, economic conditions, etc. all play roles in how they make judgements about other people and their actions. But none of these factors have been injected into the meaning of "jury of one's peers" by the executive, legislative, or judicial branch of government for two basic reasons. If "all men are created equal" to the Caucasian male(historically, a land-holding male), then any "race," set of cultural values, social environment, or economic condition that is different from the Caucasian male standard is irrelevant, at least as far as Caucasians are concerned. Also, the majority of the people in this country are Caucasian, which means that, generally, jurors will be Caucasian, judges, attorneys, and so forth. And since most jurors and other officers of the court are Caucasian, the

status quo(Caucasian power) is maintained.

When a jury of a criminal defendant's peers is seated, it is charged to presume that the defendant is **innocent**, unless or until its members find, after hearing and weighing all the evidence, that he or she is guilty **beyond a reasonable doubt.** In the O.J. Simpson case, because a majority of the jurors were of the same ancestry("race") as the defendant and had had similar life experiences, at least a majority of the jurors were willing and able to accept the presumption of his innocence. In the Kevin Allen case, however, all the jury members being Caucasian, the defendant had practically no chance of being presumed innocent--"Shucks, Bill. The police wouldn't've arrested an innocent man." He was an African male and not only that but one portrayed as a gang member, an outlaw; thus, in the eyes of the jurors, a menace to society. With the fearsome images of young African males fed to the public every day by commercial media and politicians, how could this all-Caucasian jury have been expected to feel anything other than revulsion toward Allen? Secondly, he was accused of killing a Caucasian, not just any Caucasian but a Caucasian **cop**, a symbol to Caucasians of the protection and preservation of **their** system, **their** way of life. So, in the heads of those jurors, Kevin Allen had not victimized **one** person but had attacked **their** society.

This jury could neither presume Keven Allen innocent, as instructed to do by the court, nor seriously consider that **any** aspect of the case could constitute reasonable doubt. Here is a case where the defendant was charged with shooting a cop to death with a gun. But no gun was found. Here is a case where another person was initially charged with the killing and was held in jail as the trigger-man from August 22nd. until December 28th., when the charges against him were dropped. Quoting from the March 23rd. OMAHA WORLD HERALD, [On August 21st.]"Nine people view four separate police lineups of Allen, Simmons, Harris, and Minor. One person identifies Allen as running from the van at South Side Terrace. Two people say they saw Simmons running from the van. None of the eyewitnesses to the shooting identifies Allen." Here is a case where a person, charged as an accessory and who had given a statement to police implicating Allen as the shooter, admitted that he believed the accessory

charge and an earlier and unrelated assault charge would be dropped in exchange for his cooperation.

The point here is not that the prosecution did not have any evidence against Kevin Allen but that this case was characterized by such a volume of contradictory testimony, police investigatory mistakes and misconduct, and evidence pointing away from the defendant that there is no way that **not one** of the twelve people who served on the jury could find **reasonable doubt.** And not one could find reasonable doubt because, despite its meeting of the **legal** definition of "jury of one's peers," this group of people was what all-Caucasian juries typically are when an African sits before them accused of harming a Caucasian victim--a lynch mob.

Editorial Policy

The HARAMBEE FLAME is the monthly publication of the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization(Nebraska State Pen chapter). Ours is a pan-Africanist publication, meaning that we view all people of African descent as one African people, having certain basic interests in common. Also, the HARAMBEE FLAME attempts to be Africentric, in that, through study of the history, cultures, and traditional values of African people, we seek to have and cultivate an African way of looking at things.

The main purposes of the HARAMBEE FLAME are to stimulate and inform. We list "stimulate" first because, more than anything else, we want our readers to be moved to question their/your own ideas, lives, and the circumstances in which we live and to challenge those things that must be challenged in order for us to move from a condition of mental and spiritual sevitude and physical dependence upon Caucasian institutions to a state of collective self-determination. Toward this purpose, we present commentaries, poems, etc. These do not necessarily represent the official positions of the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization.

The HARAMBEE FLAME provides information because wise people want to know what's going on and because certain kinds of information can stimulate the mind, inspire people to want to act, and influence them to pursue proper understanding so that the actions they take will be as effective as possible. The main vehicle we use to provide information is our "From Other Sources" feature in which we make an effort to provide news about the problems we African people are confronted by and the steps we are taking to resolve them. In this feature, we try to provide coverage of the activities of African people and developments affecting us in the U.S., the nations of Africa, and elsewhere. "Community News" is another vehicle.

We encourage you to submit your reports, essays, poems, ect. Please enclose stamped, self-addressed return envelope.

From Other Sources

Economic Fruits of Million Man March

"...the Million Man March's Atlanta Local Organizing Committee(ALOC) kicked off its 'Black Bank-In' campaign on Jan. 8 urging the city's 800,000 Black residents to invest in minority owned financial institutions.

"Organizers are hoping for at least 4,000 new accounts at four local Black owned banks...Statistics prove that Blacks in the area contribute more than $15 billion after taxes to the Olympic city's booming economy. Yet the four Black banks have combined assets of a mere $237 million...

"Organizers are not encouraging supporters to close existing accounts at other banks, they're only asking that a savings account be opened, or that Certificates of Deposits(CDs) are purchased at the Black banks...

"While across the country, on the West coast, Black owned banks recently experienced phenomenal results following the tremendous success of a recent 'Change Bank Day'.

"The event mounted by Recycling Black Dollars, an organization headed by Black business owners, resulted in Black Los Angeles residents, transferring $600,000 in a single day to Founders Bank. In one week the deposits boosted to $2 million across the board, for the city's four Black owned institutions...

"Los Angeles organizer, Muhammad Nassardeen, attributes the campaign's success to thoughtful planning and community involvement. Prior to the kick off, bankers, activists and residents of the greater Los Angeles area held town hall meetings allowing the community an opportunity to talk one-on-one with bankers about their concerns and expectations. 'These meetings were held to bring the bank officials before the people. Allowing bankers an opportunity to make commitments to recycle money into their communities', said Mr. Nasserdeen.

"The town hall meetings put to rest a lot of fear and apprehension some people had about doing business with

their own..."

-from "Recycling Our Dollars," page 32, April 3
THE FINAL CALL(Chicago, IL.)

Churches Burn Again In The South

"...at least 17 African-American churches have been destroyed by suspicious fires in Alabama, Tennessee, Louisiana and South Carolina during the past year. Seven churches were set afire in the middle of the night in Tennessee, and fires have been reported at four churches in Alabama, four in Louisiana and two in South Carolina...

"Among the most recent fires was the Jan. 8 blaze in Knoxville, Tenn., at the nondenominational Inner City Church, where NFL Green Bay Packer Reggie White is an associate pastor. The message left at the church was clear. Racial graffiti spray painted on a back door was not demolished during the firebombing and gunpowder, 18 Molotov cocktails and about 75 gallons of gasoline and kerosene were used to destroy the two-story brick church, according to Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms(ATF) officials in Nashville. Investigators said evidence left behind at the other sites was minimal.

"Epithets spray painted on the interracial church read, 'Die, nigger, die', and 'Nigger lovers'...

"Investigators say arson was the cause of the fires in West Tennessee, which were started before dawn when the buildings were vacant. Most of the churches were in rural areas.

"West Tennessee's all-Black Macedonia and Johnson Grove Baptist churches, in neighboring Madison and Crockett counties, respectively, were set ablaze on Jan. 13, 1995, within 90 minutes of each other...

"The same day that Alabama's Little Zion Baptist and Mount Zoar Baptist churches went up in a fire on Jan. 11, a local newspaper carried an article about the sentencing of two White men who admitted vandalizing three other Black

churches last year. A third man convicted in the incidents reportedly committed suicide.

"Authorities speculate that the fires may have been set by sympathizers of the convicted men, who admitted smashing pews, shattering windows and pulpits and, in one account, crashing a glass chandelier through a portrait of Moses and the Ten Commandments...

"Displaced church members are having services in homes, recreation facilities and other neighboring church fellowship halls. The congregations are focusing on rebuilding..."

-from "Hate Flares Again: Recent Burnings of Black Churches In The South Have Sparked Old Fears," pages 44 and 45, April EMERGE Magazine(Washington, D.C.) See page 15, "Announcements," of the FLAME.

Africentric School To Open In Columbus, Ohio

"Columbus' first Africentric School will open in August, accepting 300 students in grades K-5. Next year the school will include grades 6-8. Enrollment for the new school will be determined by lottery as with most of the city's alternative schools...

"Walnut Ridge teacher Charles Tenant was the first to call for an Africentric School in 1993. He envisions the Africentric School as a nurturing environment for students and parents. Tennant's vision includes developing a strong Parent Center, where parents can improve their own education as they participate in their child's school life. Tennant serves on the Africentric School Action Team...

"Described as a holistic approach, Africentric schooling stipulates that every child [is] capable of excelling and making valuable contributions to society in an interdependent world.

"The Africentric School Program will deepen understanding and respect for the histories, cultures, contributions

and accomplishments of African people worldwide. All facets of the teaching and learning process will focus the standard course of study through an African-centered world-view...."

-from "Support Africentric Schools In Columbus" and "Mohawk Africentric School To Open," pages 1 and 2A and 4B, March 21 COLUMBUS CALL & POST(Columbus, OH.)

Gambia Develops New Constitution

"Gambia has published a draft constitution which gives supremacy to the National Assembly...

"Under the draft, to be adopted by a referendum, the assembly will be vested with powers to censure president, vice-president and secretaries of state--the proposed new title for ministers.

"The draft is the outcome of a review of the country's 1970 constitution by a commission appointed by Capt. Yahya Jammeh's Armed Forces Provitional Ruling Council(AFPRC) on April 10, 1995...

"According to the new draft, the House will also have the authority to dismiss the leaders from office.

"The draft reaffirms fundamental rights and freedoms and extends them to include those of women, children and the disabled.

"It provides for universal adult suffrage in a multiparty system and lowers the voting age from 21 to 18...

"Under the new constitution, the powers of the executive, legislature and judiciary are to be separated...

"It also envisages the expansion of the country's Islamic Court to a panel of three judges(Cadis) qualified in Sharia law, with a review or appellate panel consisting of five persons well schooled in the Sharia law.

"'In addition, a litigant in the Cadi's Court will be entitled to representation by a person qualified in Sharia

Law', says the draft constitution.

"It envisages the institution of an Ombudsman 'to guard against maladministration, mismanagement and discriminatory practices in any government department, authority or other public body'...

"..the AFPRC said...the draft constitution will 'now be released to the Gambian people for further discussion and adoption in a referendum which will take place at a date which shall be made public.'"

-from "Gambia Gets New Draft Constitution," page 15, April 3 THE FINAL CALL

Community Organizations Confront Gang Activities

..."[In Chicago] Two organizations, 21st Century Voices of Total Empowerment(VOTE) and No Dope Express, work overtime in Black communities building positive relationships between gangs and their communities. Their political education and voter registration campaigns target Black youth, regardless of gang affiliation. VOTE's 'political education' includes classes to teach youth about the electoral process, public demonstrations that bring youth together for direct political action(such as their 5000 strong march in May 1993), and boycotts of entrepreneurs who behave irresponsibly in Black communities. VOTE has also worked actively at the neighborhood level to settle inter-gang disputes and at the city level to form peace treaties. Their most successful ventures have been a nine-month gang peace treaty and the 'Chicago Peace Summit', a conference in which gangs from around the country joined Rev. Jesse Jackson, Ben Chavis and Minister Louis Farrakhan to promote peace and empowerment for minority youth...

"On the West Coast, there are several key organization also work tirelessy to move gang members into positive activity. Jim Brown's Amer-I-Can Foundation offers a life management course(which includes classes, seminars and on the job training) that provides South Central youth with critical thinking and survival skills needed to compete in American society...

"Community In Support of the Gang Truce(CISGT) is one of a handful of Los Angeles organizations that were founded by former rival gang members after the gang truce which followed the 1992 rebellion. The organization serves Watts, Compton and South Central, and offers assistance to numerous other communities...CISGT is run by Crips and Bloods and its board is comprised of members of the community. Its Speakers Bureau program, which sends speakers across the country to address high school and college audiences, has been quite successful in terms of broadening the lives of members, as well as exposing the community to the realities facing many Black youth. CISGT is also creating a worldwide network to link gang members of African descent under a common goal of restoring their communities.

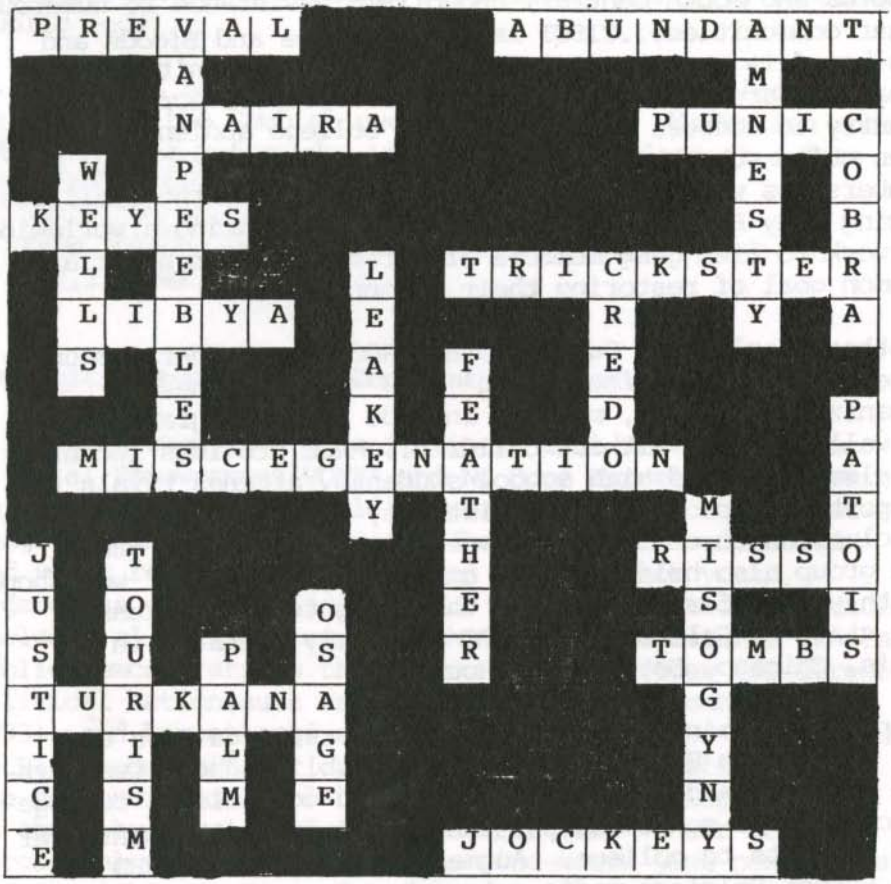
"Mothers Reclaiming Our Children(MROC) is another community based organization founded in 1992. Despite the organization's name, members include fathers, grandfathers, as well as those without children...MROC provides lectures to elementary and high school students, attends trials to support members and their relatives, and negotiates resolutions to conflicts between Black and Latino gangs. The group also holds what it calls 'legal process' workshops monthly to inform parents of their rights as citizens of the state of California. MROC currently operates in St. Louis, Chicago, Detroit and Houston.

"Functioning since 1987, Street Soldiers/Omega Boys Club was founded in San Francisco by two public school teachers-Joe Marshall and Jack Jacqua. Through counseling, college placement and scholarships, the organization has sent over 140 students to college. Augmenting the work of OBD is the Street Soldiers radio outreach program broadcast live on KMEL in the Bay area and KKBT in L.A...In addition to the radio show, the organization provides a 24-hour telephone counseling service(1-800-SOLDIER) for those who seek the assistance of professional staff members..."

-from "Building Bridges," page 69, April THE SOURCE(New York City, New York)

- Continued on page 14 -

AFRICENTRIC CROSSWORD PUZZLE # 10 - SOLUTION



Community News

On Tuesday, April 2nd., the prison chapter of the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization hosted a number of guests representing KZUM, the non-profit, non-commercial radio station here in Lincoln. Meeting with us were the station manager, Dick Noble; underwriting specialist, Adair Shanks; and volunteer programmers, Joe D. Woods and Jon Morris.

While KZUM is not an African-owned entity, there are a number of Africans serving as volunteer programmers, members of the board of directors and the community advisory board. Adair Shanks, as a specialist in soliciting underwriters for the station, is an African and one of the very few paid staff. In addition, despite the fact that the African population of Lincoln is only about 2½ percent, there is considerable music aired on KZUM which comes out of African-American and African music traditions. There is a wealth of African-American Classical music("jazz"), blues, r & b, urban contemporary, rap. Music such as reggae, juju, highlife, traditional music from the African continent, etc. are also played.

We posed several questions for discussion: What are the responsibilities that a community-access radio station has to the communities it serves? How important is it that a d.j. know the music(its history, traditions, etc.) he or she plays? In view of the fact that blues and African American classical music are creations of African people in this country, why aren't there more Africans hosting blues and African American classical music programs on KZUM? Are steps being taken to recruit more? These questions were posed to all our guests. We asked of the African guests their ideas and views on the special responsibilities that African d.j.s have to African communities and how these responsibilities play roles in decisions they make in selecting the music they play. Responses to these and other questions led to interesting and insightful discussion. We plan to conduct follow-up meetings. We give a yell to Paulette and Duane, who were scheduled to be here but were unable to get here in time.

Hearing On Capital Punishment

"In Philadelphia, the site of the trial of Mumia Abu-Jamal and many other ill-handled capital cases, the National Commission on Capital Punishment(NCCP) heard 3 days of testimony on the death penalty. On March 25, 26, and 27th, a public review of capital punishment was held in the chambers of the Philadelphia City Council.

The purpose of the National Commission on Capital Punishment is to sharpen the debate and to arouse the public to action on this issue. Advisors and sponsors of the National Commission on Capital Punishment include Helen Prejean, Honorary Chair; Ramsey Clark; Cornel West; Edward Kennedy; Don Cabana and UAW Local 2325. The Commission has been organized by the Bruderhof community.

"The NCCP hearing...provided a platform for death row survivors, death row families and some law enforcement organizations. It also reviewed the fairness of the application of the death penalty and clarified misinformation concerning capital punishment.

"Witnesses who testified included Ron Hampton of the National Black Police Association, Pat Bane of Murder Victims Families for Reconciliation and Ethan Taubes of the International League for Human Rights...

"Hearings hosted by the National Commission are expected to be convened in other cities across the nation. The National Commission on Capital Punishment can be reached c/o the Bruderhof Foundation, Route 213, Rifton NY 12471-0903..."

-from "National Commission On Capital Punishment Hearing," pages 1 and 2, April COALITION FOR PRISONERS' RIGHTS NEWSLETTER(Santa Fe, N.M.)

Announcements

AIM QUARTERLY Magazine is sponsoring an essay contest on the question, "Can race relations in the United States be improved by the coalition of Moamar Gadhafi and Louis Farrakhan." Write to the magazine on this question in 500 words or less. Writers of the top four essays will receive $100 awards. AIM QUARTERLY Magazine
P.O. Box 20554
Chicago, IL. 60620

The SCLC National Headquarters has started a fund to help the Burned-out congregations. Those interested in making donations should send them to SCLC National Headquarters, "Burned Churches," 334 Auburn Ave., N.E., Atlanta, Ga. 30312.

MOBETTER NEWS is the bi-monthly newspaper of Omni-U. Edited and published by Dr. Gloria L. Peace, its writers include Dr. Peace, Dr. Yaounde Olu, Dr. Kwame Nantambu, M. E. wa Langa, Makeda Cheryl Baker, and Almeta Steemer. Like the HARAMBEE FLAME, MOBETTER NEWS is an Africentric publication. Omni-U., which publishes MOBETTER NEWS, also carries a number of books and tapes of interest to conscious African people. It also sponsors educational tours to our Motherland. For information on MOBETTER NEWS and other OMNI-U services, write to: MOBETTER NEWS; P.O. Box 1447; South Holland, IL; 60473. Or call (708)331-1116.

The prison chapter of the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization meets approximately two Saturdays(1-3 p.m.) and two Tuesdays(6-8 p.m.) per month at the state prison in Lincoln, NE. As a prison chapter, our main objective is that of the transformation of "black" males into **African men.** We encourage you Sisters and Brothers of the Omaha-Lincoln-area African communities to get involved with us. Write to: Harambee Afrikan Cultural Org.; P.O. Box 2500; Lincoln, NE.; 68542-2500. Or call 471-3161 between 1 and 2:45 p.m., Monday through Friday. Ask for ext. 3380. Please leave a message. We will return your call.

Back In Time

Beginning in 1981, the United States rehearsed the invasion of Grenada openly. It practiced the war game "Ocean Venture" in which it bombed the Puerto Rican island of Vieques, calling it "Amber of the Amberines"(Grenada of the Grenadines). In this grisly make-believe, a situation is supposed to occur where Americans are held hostage. As we know, this was the first excuse used to justify the invasion of Grenada...

The Pentagon has admitted in secret Congressional briefings that it knew of the coup against [Prime Minister Maurice] Bishop two weeks before it happened. The Ranger unit participating in the invasion had spent six days between September 23 and October 2, 1983, practicing the takeover of an airport and the liberation of hostages, a maneuver about which the Pentagon had requested no publicity. One Senator disclosed that there were CIA agents accompanying the seventy students flown out of Grenada on October 26, the day after the invasion. P.S.Y.O.P.S., the psychological operations unit of the U.S. occupation forces--a new development heard from in combat here for the first time--was quick to plaster St. Georges and the rest of Grenada with posters of Bernard Coard and General Hudson Austin, stripped naked and blindfolded, holding them up to ridicule and scorn as the slayers of the Grenadian people's beloved Maurice Bishop...scapegoats for his death were essential...

Nothing is now heard of the two Americans known to have been involved in the last days of the Bishop regime, one of whom was wanted on a weapons charge here in the U.S., and one of whom holds passports in two countries. Who were they working for and on what side? Their identities have never been divulged...

Source: THE BLACK SCHOLAR Magazine, Jan.-Feb., 1984

MAY THE SPIRIT OF OMOWALE(MALCOLM X)

BE AT PEACE IN THE REALM OF OUR

ANCESTORS